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ABSTRACT

Daily observations of children in the classroom and on the playground show how children construct and experience gender in school. Observations were made in working class communities and emphasize the experiences of fourth and fifth graders. Most children were White, but a sizable minority were Latino, Chicano, or African American. It is argued that the organization and meaning of gender are influenced by age, ethnicity, race, sexuality, and social class, and that they shift with social context. Gender identity is regarded, not through the lens of individual socialization or difference, but as a social process involving groups of children. Children, or "kids," as they are called here, take an active hand in constructing gender, and collective practices of children animate the process. In this acknowledgment, children are regarded as full social actors, living in the present but influenced by larger forces. Extensive anecdotal and background notes for each chapter give ideas some context and direct readers to other specific studies. (Contains 285 references.) (SLD)

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